

frequency, relative with penitency, were the best old Jacqueline said, with her death as the consequence, and added, "I am afraid of the disease just before me;— yet it will be a great blessing and more than I can possibly give thanks for, to consider it before me, — when only consider how  
**THE** *monthly religious magazine* (containing the best religious reading for young and middle aged persons, general and religious news, and a good deal of original matter) will be still at the

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## THE BOW OF GOD AND ITS LESSONS.

BY REV. W. B. ALGER.

THE phenomena of nature, the daily occurrences of life, the facts of personal experience,—each of these is to us, in a remarkable degree, what our own notice and study, or indifference and neglect, make it. One man finds tongues in the trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in everything ; because his eyes are in his head, and he reflects upon what he sees. Another, because his mind and heart are not vividly awake and anxious to learn, goes through this solemn life-school of Providence, where day uttereth speech unto day and night sheweth knowledge unto night, deriving but little profit from all the instructions of the world.

A primrose by the river's brim  
A yellow primrose is to him,—  
And it is nothing more.

This article is intended to embody some meditations suggested by the Rainbow which so splendidly adorned the eastern heavens, a few days ago, with its glorious and shimmering arch. Its principal object, subsidiary to the moral lessons directly inculcated by it, is to give an example of the way in which we should use whatever comes within the cognizance of our faculties, in order that we may draw from it both enjoyment and instruction.

It was near the close of a day of storms that the rain ceased to fall, from the western horizon the clouds slowly rolled up,

the sun dropped his full orb into view, the whole prospect, with all its hills and trees, was enveloped in a flood of fine, golden mist, and over the opposite sky, — as if the arm of God would embrace the earth, — stretched a rainbow of almost unparalleled completeness and brilliancy. We gazed gratefully upon that living, trembling cincture of gorgeous gems until, little by little, it faded away, and evening trod out its last, bright vestiges ‘with her gray sandals.’ As our eyes then fixed their lingering looks upon that beautiful object, in like manner, how many millions have in other times looked upon the same scene ! In every clime of earth, age after age, God has occasionally hung up his bow in the hall of clouds, and there, one after another, the successive generations of mankind have beheld its loveliness with mingled emotions of pleasure and praise. Where are they now ? All gone down to dust in the valley of the shadow of death. And still it returns, as fresh in the magnificence of its undecaying beauty as when first after the deluge it spanned the sky over Noah’s ark. What uncounted multitudes, who have gazed fondly on it since then, have been gathered into the house appointed for all the living ! So, too, it will be with us, and others will look joyfully on the returning bow when we have vanished forever. Our steps, like those of our fathers, must soon be to the dark land whence none come back. Surely, oh surely, with inevitable steps, the solemn day comes when you and I, reader, shall lie silent and cold, and be borne by the hands of men to our long home, leaving the mourners to go about the streets. We ought, then, to be ready. Let us see to it that we are prepared for all that awaits us then and thereafter. For, unless all that is clearest in reason, dearest in faith, and noblest in prophecy, be a miserable mistake, — “unless the very pulses at our wrists throb to a splendid falsehood,” there is, elsewhere, a company which our spirits will join when they escape from the earthly tabernacles which now imprison them here.

In the elder times, when men knew but little of natural philosophy, before the optical principles involved in the phenomena of the rainbow had been discovered to explain it upon grounds of reason, it was accounted for by a pious faith in the immediate, active presence of the Almighty. They regarded it as the bow of Jehovah, hung by his own hand in the front

of the firmament. Whenever it shone over the green, undeluged earth, with what reverence the youthful world's gray fathers wandered forth to contemplate its sacred sign, and bless the Lord of day and night, seedtime and harvest, which it told them should never fail again! Ages have rolled by since then. It has been found to be a fixed law of nature that the reflection and refraction of light in certain ways, at certain angles, will always produce the appearance of the rainbow, that the same august scenery is exhibited, on a small scale, in the bubble blown by a child from the end of a pipe-stem, as when the glory of the storm-bow blazes half round the engirdled sky. And no longer do men see the outstretched hand of Jehovah setting his bow in the cloud. No, such a belief is thought superstitious, and its godly reverence has greatly died out. The original Builder is removed from his works and a rigid mechanism of dead law takes the place of the conscious arranging of the living God. The thought we are stating has been finely embodied in regretful verse.

When science from creation's face  
Enchantment's veil withdraws,  
What lovely visions yield their place  
To cold material laws!

That this is really the common opinion is unquestionable. Its utter folly is astonishing. It is without so much as the shadow of a reason. Does the explanation of an occurrence do away with its cause? Does the philosophical interpretation of the principles according to which natural phenomena occur and of the manner in which they occur, destroy the agency of the immanent Creator? They only show the way in which he acts. When we see the laws of the reflection and refraction of light, do we see what produces the rainbow? Evidently we only perceive the way in which it is produced, which is a totally distinct thing from the energy which produces it. There is still an active, essential cause, unseen. That cause is God. The material out of which an article is manufactured, the processes through which it is passed and the tools used in its fabrication, all these together cannot account for the finished product; they imply an active, intelligent power, a man who uses them and accomplishes the result. So light and its laws are simply the means and the way by which God makes the

rainbow. It is, therefore, as the book of Genesis well says, His bow, and he does set it in the cloud. The antique philosopher spoke wisely, furthermore, when he called it a token of a covenant between the Deity and the earth ; for it is the symbolic representative of Beauty, and beauty is the promise and the legible manifestation of love. Without good will in the Creator there would not be any beauty in the creation. Beauty, which, with no stretch of imagination, may be considered as typified in the rainbow, is, in its various forms, a chief source of pleasure to us, or at any rate ought to be. It was intended by our Maker to yield us constant enjoyment, to pour into our hearts a pure stream of ineffable satisfaction and prophetic suggestion. It is, then, an expression of his love, a covenant between him and us. The flowers, so dear to us all, thickly scattered over mountain, meadow and glen, and with which we should be so loth to part, are unnecessary.

God might have made the earth bring forth  
Enough for great and small,  
The oak-tree and the cedar-tree  
Without a flower at all.

But as the free gift of his overflowing love, they are sown all over the world. So is that beauty which arises from the diversity of colors, unnecessary. A perpetual, dull, gray light, spread unvaryingly over all things, might, if God had so pleased, have answered for all necessary purposes. But his infinite goodness led him to supply his intelligent creatures with the pleasures of brilliant and solemn beauty clothed in an ever-changing imagery of dazzling and dying hues. Science, with her telescopic eye, traces this fact through the worlds of space, in some with more gorgeous, in others with more sombre, manifestations. That vast ring which surrounds the planet Saturn at a distance of nineteen thousand miles, appears at one time as a resplendent arch in the sky, twenty-seven thousand miles wide and glittering with inexpressible splendors: at another time it seems a dead, black band, concealing the sun. In other, more distant worlds there are phenomena apparent which render it probable that the inhabitants enjoy, alternately, a green day, a yellow day, a white day, a purple day. The lavish provisions made for our happiness in the profuse distribution of beauty over this verdant 'ball that floats us through the heavens' bear unequivocal wit-

ness to our Creator's goodness, nay are the very expression of it. Viewing the rainbow as a symbol of this we may justly cling to the old Hebrew interpretation of it, and, whenever we see it bent across the canopy of heaven, really believe that God has set his bow in the cloud for a token of a covenant between him and the earth, a bond of his inviolable love to man. No other interpretation can be given of it that is half so poetic, half so philosophical, half so religious, half so satisfactory, as this. In fact no other possible explanation goes to the root of the matter, and reveals its first cause and its last significance.

The facts and analogies connected with the rainbow finely teach several practical, moral lessons. Two or three useful thoughts are at once suggested by the rarity, uncertainty, and brevity, of its visits. Sometimes it only appears twice or thrice in a whole year, and even then stays but an instant. This is undoubtedly one leading cause of its being so generally considered an object of surpassing beauty, and of its being so commonly enjoyed, and so much admired. If it were visible all the time, or for one hour each day, more than half of its charm would have fled, and soon, men would hardly deign to look at it. This is evidently wrong. We ought not to make the rarity of a sight a test of its beauty, the brevity of a thing a measure of its value, but, if anything rather the reverse. Pearls and diamonds would be just as beautiful as they are now, were they as thick as pebbles; still, they would not seem so to the common eye. The shifting scenery of clouds in the dome overhead is a sight of wonderful beauty at nearly any hour; but, because it is so frequent and free, we draw but little delight from it, we scarcely notice it. The illuminated vault of heaven glittering with its magnificent effulgence nightly from of old, is a scene of sublime splendor and of awful pomp immeasurably transcending the rainbow, yet, because the august exhibition of it is so often and so cheaply accessible, not one man out of a thousand regards it with a tythe of the pleasure with which he contemplates that evanescent girdle of colors. This should not be true to the extent that it is. We should try more to enjoy those common things which are ever close at hand, which are the most valuable of all things, and frequently, the most beautiful, too. When you would think it a high privilege to gaze through a telescope at distant worlds,

remember how good a thing it is to look with your naked eye on the flower that nestles at your foot or on the face of a dear friend, and enjoy that as much and be as grateful for it.

The appearance of the rainbow in the sky, as we have said, is quite a rare thing, its coming is uncertain, its stop is brief. But take a glass prism, turn it up to the light, at any time you will, and you will see within it, apparently spanning the whole dome, and bathing in its supernatural hues of gold, emeralds and blood, the grass, trees, houses, hills and rivers, a rainbow far more gorgeous than was ever actually seen in heaven from the flood till now. That one, the objective, you can see but rarely, you know not when, and but for a little while. This one, the subjective, you can see at any time, in almost any place, and as long as you please. As with that one, so is it with the outward possessions, glories and pleasures of life. But few have them, they are uncertain in the winning and in the enjoying, they are short in duration, they perish at the portals of the tomb. As with this one, so is it with the inward, spiritual treasures, triumphs and delights of the soul. They are within reach of all, surely attainable at any time, and invulnerable to wind and flame and flood and death itself, forever. Perhaps you cannot have wealth and luxury without ; but you can have riches of knowledge and virtue and the invaluable pleasures of a cheerful spirit and a contented mind, within. Perhaps you cannot win public honors and wear the laurels of delightful fame among men, without ; but you can achieve victories over all that is evil, and enjoy the applause of your conscience and your God, within. And he that doeth this is greater than he that swayeth an imperial sceptre. The world around you is not much under your control, but the world within you is almost entirely in your power. And this alone is, comparatively speaking, of any importance. In the soul are the issues of life and death. There the battles of destiny are fought. There Christ or Satan sits on his throne. There heaven or hell is established. Furthermore, the outward depends on the inward, the hue of the sunshine depends on the medium through which it streams. As the prism transfuses the light that falls upon it into a splendid column of seven-banded colours, so a great, pure soul, possessed by disinterested affections and ruled by godlike principles, will trans-

mute the scenery and the circumstances of its lot into a beautiful and glorious life, a profound and eternal experience of tranquil, ever-rising joy.

The rainbow, rare, transitory, and eminently beautiful as it is, still is not always seen and enjoyed even when it is visible. Men, absorbed in business, do not chance to get a glimpse of it; or, very much occupied with other matters, cannot stop to gaze upon it and muse; or, coarse and insensible, derive no pleasure or profit from it and would not care if another one were never to be seen. Travelling once at the close of a summer day through a country village just after a thunder shower, I passed by a little, ten-feet building in which a shoemaker sat pounding a piece of leather upon his lapstone and whistling most merrily at his labor. Far away over his humble work-shop, stretched upon a vast black cloud across the whole arch of the horizon from brow to brow, hung the most vivid rainbow I ever beheld. There it was, silently reaching away in its inimitable loveliness, seeming to clasp sky and earth in its curve of beauty. And there he sat beneath it, hammering and whistling away all unconscious of the glorious symbol bending above him. And soon, too soon, it had gone. Ah me, I sighed, and passed slowly on, thus it is with us all, poor plodders on the earth. We wander through this initiatory life, unaware of the possible splendor, greatness, peace of lofty virtue, and inappreciable destiny of immortality that hang in the moral heavens, over the head, in the reach of each one of us. Reader, may it not be so with you. May you rather study everything without and within, and endeavor to drain each object and event of its beauty, joy, wisdom, love, taking for your motto this glorious little fragment of a deathless poet:—

My heart leaps up when I behold  
A rainbow in the sky :  
So was it when my life began ;  
So is it now I am a man ;  
So be it when I shall grow old,  
Or let me die !  
The child is father of the man ;  
And I could wish my days to be  
Bound each to each by natural piety.

Without a cloud for it to be projected upon there could be no rainbow. The bare statement of the fact is suggestive of

much, is charged with weighty moral meanings. Without a dark, wet cloud we could see no bright, glowing rainbow. The figure of a picture cannot be drawn, nor its colors laid, in air. The artist must have a canvass to paint upon. Without a sombre background there can be no brilliant foreground. So unless there were certain afflictions there could not be certain blessings. The possibility of those is necessarily implied in the actuality of these. Experience of happiness implies exposure to misery. Susceptibility to pleasure cannot exist without susceptibility to pain. If some odors were not offensive others could not be agreeable. If the tongue is pleasantly affected by sweetness it must needs be unpleasantly affected by bitterness. 'If defeat were unknown victory would not be celebrated with songs of triumph.' The unutterable blessings of affection necessarily imply liability to the corresponding woes of betrayal and bereavement. In the midst of afflictions it is a comfort to think, that without exposure to the temporary sufferings of humanity we should not be able to experience its incomparable enjoyments. Is it not far better to weep ever so bitterly over a grave in which the dearest one you knew lies cold, than not to have been able to love? Action and reaction are precisely alike. The pendulum vibrates through equal distances on either side. He that has the most heart knows the most sorrow as well as the most joy, and the ground of all great thoughts and immortal attainments, is sadness. It is well to remember, also, that as in proportion to the darkness and depth of the cloud on which the prismatic colors are cast will be the distinct brilliancy of the effect produced, so the sharpness of past trials enhances the satisfactions of present good fortune. It adds to the traveller's joy in the bosom of his family to recollect how he pined for them in a far away land. How much the voyager's delight on the solid shore is deepened by a thought of the tempest when the sails flew in ribbons, the masts crashed by the board, and death yawned from every wave! Snugly shielded to sink in warm repose and hear the growling winds howl over the steady battlements, is pleasure above the luxury of quiet sleep. And it sends a thrill of profounder enjoyment and of more fervent gratitude through the pulses of health in the open air to remember the close room of sickness and the long hours of anguish. Evil is a dark back-

ground filled with hideous figures, but it gives distinctness and prominence to the bright hues and fair forms of good.

There is not only a rainbow in the day, formed by the sun, but also one in the night, formed, in similar manner, by the moon. It is not often seen, requiring favorable circumstances to make it visible, and being even then, so faint and attenuated that it can only be perceived by him who purposely looks for it. Consequently, a great many persons do not know that there is such a thing. There are a great many things in the world besides this, which can only be found by those who patiently and purposely search for them. It is occasionally seen in a clear night, at high moon, gleaming, dim, and almost white, from those dense masses of vapor which rise from the marshes. Being at Niagara Falls a few summers ago at the time of the full moon, I went out late one evening to see if I could get sight of a lunar bow. Standing upon table rock, by the edge of the precipice of thunder, while the wind was blowing thick clouds of mist away from the awful plunge, I looked steadily down the river for some time, but saw no sign of it. At length, casting my eye into the vapor just overhead, I was startled to perceive that there it was, near enough, almost, as it seemed, for me to lay my hand upon it. How often it happens that persons miss the object of their search by looking too far for it, and find it by looking nearer home ! Reaching entirely across the chasm, and typically uniting the British with the American shore, it stood there, thin and spectral, the very ghost of a rainbow. It was so faded and lifeless, because it was produced by borrowed light, because it was the reflection of a reflection. The light taken by the moon from the sun, and then transmitted to the earth, had thus lost the vividness of its original energy, and had grown pale and feeble. It is so, likewise, with second hand thoughts, with traditionary faith, with knowledge received from books or other sources and not tested, and proved, and incorporated by one's own patient meditation and personal experience. He that is wise is wise for himself. Thoughts which we take from another, without making them our own by really comprehending them and their relations, lose their vitality and fade and dwindle into the forceless images of what they were. The knowledge we gather merely from hearsay does not deserve the name. It is not

ours, and if we undertake to use it in any way, before confirming and appropriating it, we may misapply it and expose ourselves to ridicule and to danger. A mule, laden with bags of salt, was once travelling in company with an ass, laden with bags of wool. At length, coming to a stream of water, the weary mule, instead of crossing on the bridge, waded through the brook, and the salt melting, he was relieved of his burden. The ass, seeing how lightly he walked, asked him how he got rid of his load, and being told, that it was by walking through the stream they had just passed, thought that he too would try it; but the wool becoming saturated with water, pressed down upon the poor beast with a double weight. The empiric continually runs the risk of such results as this. He who trades upon borrowed capital is destitute both of power and of safety. He who is not original, using that word in its true sense, not as meaning novelty, but as meaning thoroughness of mastery and assimilation,—is always wavering and inefficient. How weak and worthless is the religious faith of those persons who base it upon the authority of others instead of founding it upon the central and intelligent convictions of their own souls! Let us, then, not be mere borrowers, but for knowledge go directly to the original sources, study and thought; and for faith lean not on any man, but, for ourselves, experience the inexhaustible realities of religion, the unutterable blessedness of the divine life.

The subject suggests another thought which will appropriately close this rambling article, already too much prolonged. It is this. The rainbow joins earth and heaven. Basing itself upon the two sides of the world it arches over and sustains the sky upon its top. The Scandinavians in their mythology call it the bridge Bifrost, because it unites the lower world to the upper and glitters with many colors. They represent Heimdall, the warder of Valhalla and the servant of the gods, walking up and down upon it between Asgard and earth and conveying intelligence to the celestial abode of what happens among men. Now, as this fairy bridge seems to link the two worlds together, so should our experience join and reconcile them, its foundation of happiness and good works, on earth; its aspiring summit of faith and outlook of contemplation, in the kingdom of heaven; the religion which we profess forming a Jacob's lad-

der upon which our prayers shall ascend, carrying up that praise which is our reasonable service, and God's blessings descend, bringing down that favor which is eternal life.

If we lay to heart the lessons now inculcated and obey them in daily life, especially calling to mind their import whenever we again behold the object which suggested them, these words will not have been written in vain, but will enable us to realize how appropriate is the sentiment, how eloquent are the words of two ancient wise men among the Hebrews. "God doth set his bow in the cloud for a token of a covenant between him and the earth. Look upon the rainbow and praise Him who made it. Very beautiful it is in the brightness thereof. It compasseth the heaven with a glorious circle, and the hands of the Most High have bended it."

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#### THE DEPARTED.

*"He shall give His angels charge concerning thee, and help thee in all thy ways."*

Ye come to me, transfigured ones, in sorrow's darkest hour,  
And on my weary, way-worn heart, your dew of blessing shower.  
Ye are with me, in the silent night, in love almost divine.  
Your heaven-inspired, earnest eyes gaze fondly into mine:  
I feel your angel presences, I breathe celestial air,  
And welcome to my listening soul your songs of holy cheer.

Beloved of the Chastener! Thou comest to me now;  
I know that angel-woven wreath, upon thy gentle brow;  
A crown of thorns it seemed to us in all thy suffering here,—  
A fragrant garland it unfolds in heaven's bright atmosphere!  
Thou art an angel now,—oh weave such radiant wreath for me;  
In every thorny bud of earth, teach me that flower to see!

Thou smil'st an answer to my prayer, and bringest to my side  
Those first-born darlings of thy home, whom death could not divide,

The early blest, who passed away in childhood's sunny bloom,  
To brighten with their track of light, thy pathway to the tomb.  
Their gentle arms enfold my neck, their breath is on my cheek;  
Of heavenly love and future bliss, their whispered accents speak.

And thou! the starry-browed — the tuneful, hoping heart —  
Sweet joy-song of our memories, which never can depart;  
I hear thy ready, lightsome step, thy beaming eye I see,  
And on that fair, uplifted brow, a blessing rests for me;  
A benediction all divine, in reverent gladness given —  
The fullness of the Saviour's joy, which seraphs share in Heaven.

All green and fragrant blooms the path thy youthful footsteps trod,  
And still thy loving words and works ascend in praise to God.  
The cheerful trust, the courage high, which tuned thy parting breath  
And bore thee swan-like down the lone and shadowy vale of death,  
In new and golden melody each gloomy fear shall quell, —  
“ He gave — He took — He will restore — He doeth all things well!”

Ye, too, whose long-lost forms we never can forget,  
The Guardians of our early home, oh, ye are with us yet!  
Benignant in your faithful love, and tender in your care,  
The mother of my childhood's hours, still bending to my prayer,  
The father of my riper years, the tranquil, grave and true,  
Whose sad departure o'er my soul death's darkest shadow threw.

Oh fill me with your holy peace, protect me by your power,  
Let no foreboding, anxious cares, oppress me in this hour;  
Plead for me, best and sainted ones, before the Father's throne,  
Plead for me, that in doubt and fear, I ne'er may be alone;  
That ye my angels still may come, my trembling feet to guide,  
Through every thorny path of life, on to my Saviour's side.

## AGNES PARSONS.

[Concluded.]

"Mercy," said Agnes a few moments after the girls had left her, "I am afraid you thought me very ungrateful and obstinate, not to accept Isabella's offer."

"No," said Mercy, "but I was sorry, I know exactly how you feel, Agnes, about going out, but the longer you indulge in it, the harder it will be to break through it."

"Well, what is the use of my going out at all?"

"To preserve your health, in the first place."

"I do not want to preserve my health," said Agnes passionately, "I would rather die than not."

"Agnes!"

"Oh Mercy have patience with me, have mercy on me. I am burdened beyond my strength to bear. What should I live for? What is left for me but sorrow and loneliness?"

"You should live because it is God's pleasure: we must not snatch the boon of death from his hand: and it is not his pleasure that you should live without an object."

"What object can I have?"

"What object! Look around you, and see what is to be done in the world. Look at the sorrow and pain under which the whole creation groans. Look at the sin, the ignorance, the oppression in the world. Look even at this town comparatively small, and see what is to be done here. See the child growing up in ignorance, learning nothing save lessons of vice and depravity, fitting for no station in life but the jail or the prison. Look at the peace of families destroyed and the souls ruined by intemperance. See the poor and the sorrowing needing sympathy and encouragement, no less than assistance, and do not ask what object you can have. Is not the saving of an immortal soul, the training up of one child in the way he should go, the comforting of one sick bed, object enough?"

Agnes seemed roused from her listlessness as she asked, "But what can I do? We are not rich and I have no money to give away."

"But you have time and talents to give away, and these are more than money. Even here at home how much you might accomplish!"

"You mean by teaching the children?"

"Yes, by teaching the children, and taking part in your mother's other cares."

"I suppose I might do that. I know mother does not like the children to go to a large school. I presume she would like to have me teach them at home, but how can I? It is easy for those who have never suffered, to talk of exertion and resignation; let them wait till they are tried. It is very easy to talk."

"But Agnes—forgive me my dear—do you never think of aught but the darkness of your lot? Do you never remember the mercies God has mingled in the cup of affliction?"

"What mercies?"

"Your pleasant home, your kind and sympathising friends, not to mention others far, far, beyond these. Oh Agnes, do you ask what? The happiness of watching him through his sickness, of his calm heroism, of never having to blush for any act of his whole life, and above all the blessed certainty which nothing can take from you that he loved you. Never, never ask again what you have to be grateful for, but thank God every hour in your life that you are not as other women."

Mercy rose and walked to the window: it was not often that her habitual calm was so disturbed, but Agnes had aroused a burst of passionate feeling, which it required all her strength to subdue. Mercy had suffered deeply and her suffering had the additional burden of secrecy. No one knew what was passing in the depths of her spirit when George Lee lay on his death bed. No one guessed the storm and whirlwind in her soul as she went calmly to the round of her daily cares and duties on the day his body was committed to the faithful grave. She blamed no one but herself. George Lee had been very kind to her, had walked and talked with her, had brought her books, and opened to her mind new stores of knowledge and new worlds of thought, but in all this he had never breathed one word of preference. His engagement to Agnes Parsons came upon her like a thunderbolt, nevertheless, she concealed

her agony, and was as calm when she congratulated Agnes upon her happiness as if she had never known care in her life. Now she could come to Agnes' side and strive to comfort her with all calmness and quietness, till agitated by her friend's insensibility to the mercies of her lot.

Some idea of what Mercy was feeling flashed across Agnes' mind. She rose, and putting her arms around her laid her head on Mercy's shoulder. After a pause she said,

"I believe I have been ungrateful, Mercy, I will try to think more of these things. If I had more religious faith, I should be happier. It seems to me that if I could bring myself to feel a resurrection as well as to believe it, the future would be more bright to me."

"Why cannot you do so?"

"I am sure I do not know, how shall I?"

"I hardly know how you will set about it. You should dwell upon the scripture history of it I think till it becomes like reality to you. Of course prayer must come in as the great help."

"I do not love to pray," said Agnes timidly.

"I believe that is no unusual feeling, said Mercy, "but you will learn to love it if you persevere."

"How?"

"If you accustom yourself to consider your devotion as addressed to a friend who knows all your sorrows better than any one else can know them, and what is more sees the object of them, one who will not judge you harshly or unjustly, and will never suffer you to be tempted more than you can bear, one who loves you and cares for your welfare beyond all others, if you express every thought and wish to him in confidence and faith, you will soon learn to love prayer."

"But Mercy, what do you mean by praying in faith? Do you mean that we shall have just what we ask for?"

"No, because we cannot tell but we may ask what would be far from best for us. By praying in faith, I mean believing that God will grant what is best, whether we ask it or not. 'Thy will be done,' is therefore the most comprehensive and the most perfect of all prayers."

"But ought we not to ask for particular blessings if we think we need them?"

"Yes, I think we are plainly taught and encouraged to do so, all through the New Testament. Christ allows us to ask for all we think we need, and so long as we feel perfect submission to God's will as to the result, it seems to me that it is proper for us to do so. But there are some things for which we need never be afraid to pray."

"Such as what?"

"For spiritual mercies: for strength to resist temptation, for calmness and resignation, and for the gift of the holy spirit."

"Now Mercy, what do you mean by the gift of the Holy Spirit? Do you mean an influence out of, and foreign to ourselves? Do you think God communicates directly to our spirits?"

"I do, and I think we have scripture warrant for the expectation that God will, in answer to our prayers, give directly to us a help which we should never find elsewhere. Have you never felt, Agnes, especially in your first effort to do right, as if it were not in your own power to direct your course, as if you needed and must have help from without?"

"Yes indeed and I have thought so often. 'Who is sufficient for these things?' But do you believe that we really shall have this help if we ask it?"

"Certainly."

"But how!"

"If you mean to ask me how spirit communicates with spirit, I answer at once, I cannot tell. We know so little of the nature of spirit at all, that we must not expect to explain away all mystery. But that spirit does communicate with spirit and God with us, I do fully believe. Perhaps if we were more in the habit of listening for the inward voice, we might know more about it."

"A great many people would call you transcendental and mystical, Mercy."

"A great many people talk a great deal of what they do not understand," said Mercy smiling. "I know very little about the transcendental philosophy. My views of the Spirit may perhaps be mystical, as all which relates to Spirit must be in some degree, but I also believe they are scriptural."

"I was going to read the life of Fichte," said Agnes, "but Dr. Martyn ridiculed it to such a degree that I did not undertake it."

"Dr. Martyn is much in the habit of ridiculing what is above his comprehension. I hope you do not pin your faith upon his sleeve."

"You do not like Dr. Martyn, Mercy," said Agnes with a smile at her friend's warmth, the first that had been seen to brighten her face for many a long day.

"No, Agnes, I do not. I never can like any one who has always a sneer and a suspicion ready for any generous action or emotion, and who has such an exalted opinion of his own intellectual powers that he cannot conceive anything to be worthy of attention which he cannot at once understand and appreciate. But perhaps I do him injustice. He does not like me, and that may be partly the reason I do not like him."

"He is afraid of you, Mercy. He thinks you are such a blue."

"Such a blue! I wonder what a blue is!"

"A woman with any degree of cultivation is a blue with him. He thinks that women are meant to sew, to spin and churn, to wash dishes and tend babies and that any talent or imagination is as much out of place in them as it would be in a cow."

"I am not prepared to say how much talent or imagination cows may possess, but I do think that amongst all the women I have known, those gifted with the most intellect and with the most cultivation are those who attend best to the plain and common duties of life."

"My mother for instance," said Agnes.

"Yes, your mother, and our friend Mrs. Caldwell and Isabella, and a hundred others I could name. I should think Dr. Martyn would like Maria Brown, unless he objects to beauty as well as talent."

"Oh by no means: He thinks women ought to be pretty, but it must be of a very gentle order; he does not like black hair or flashing eyes. And he has a great admiration of what he calls impulsive temperament, by which he means, if I understand him, people who never have any fixed principles of action but live just as it happens."

"Maria will suit him to a tittle I think. She is not over burthened with cultivation."

"Well, leaving the Dr. alone and coming back to what we

were talking about. What did Christ mean when he said, 'Lo I am with you always'?"

"Just what he said."

"But how is he with us always?"

"I am not prepared to say: but that he is present with us and helping us in our troubles and griefs, I do not doubt any more than I doubt the presence of the spirit."

"You are happy in your faith. Who are those coming in?"

"Isabella and Ella," said Mercy. "Now Agnes, won't you go to ride as Isabella wished you to!"

Agnes hesitated—"I assure you Agnes you would please your father and mother so. Your mother is very uneasy about you."

"Well Mercy I will go. And if I can—I won't promise—but if I can I will propose to mother to begin teaching the children again next week."

"That is right, and one thing more, dear Agnes, will you not try to go to church next Sunday: I know it will do you good to hear Mr. Harte preach."

"I partly promised Mr. Harte yesterday that I would go, but I dread the first time so much. However perhaps I will."

"Well Mercy did you think that we had eloped!" asked Ella, as she threw herself into a chair. "Oh! I am so tired. Isabella has dragged me into every shop in town in search of brown cotton and blue check for her lovely boys at the orphan asylum."

"Oh Ella, we only went to four places."

"And no longer ago than yesterday," said Mercy, "she dragged me into every shop in town—yes Ella every one—in search of a bundle of braid of a particular shade."

"Oh well that was a matter of importance," said Ella laughingly—"and more than that, Mercy, she has actually made me promise to make two blue aprons for Tommy Brown and Jemmy Smith."

"Won't you let me make one?" asked Agnes. "Perhaps the task will not be so dreadful to me, as I have actually made little boys' aprons before, though not for Tommy Brown, or Jemmy Smith."

"No, no!" said Ella, "Indeed you are not going to rob me of my beautiful work. I dare say Isabella can give you some of

the same sort, for she purchased enough of the raw material to clothe a regiment."

"Ella, Ella, I shall certainly ask Mr. Harte to preach a sermon on the evil of exaggeration, I only bought enough for six boys."

"And I shall write an essay upon the benefit of a lively imagination," retorted Ella.

"You will have Mercy on your side," said Agnes. "She thinks a woman is much better prepared for the active duties of life, if she have a great deal of imagination."

"There, Mrs. Vale," asked Ella, "what can you say now?"

"That you are certainly well prepared for the active duties of life, Ella, if that is the case. Whether you are as well prepared for the passive ones is another question."

"Oh you are much too wise for me. I was never intended for what Aunt Lucy calls an Argufyer. But Mercy if you mean to go any farther this afternoon we must proceed, for it is five o'clock and you promised to take tea with me."

"What say you about going to ride, Agnes?"

"Oh I think I will go — that is — you are sure you will see no one, Isabella?"

"No one but old Mace the coachman if you do not wish it. I will not even ask Mercy and Ella if you say nay."

"Oh ask them by all means," said Agnes, "if your carriage will hold us all."

"Our carriage will hold all that ever wanted to get into it."

"What say the young ladies?"

"Why—if you are not absent too long——"

"We cannot be gone very long as there is not time. Come, you may as well go as not."

"Just as you say," said Ella, "I never resist. I have suffered all my life for the want of having a will of my own."

"You of all people in the world: But I must home and order the carriage and will leave you to help Agnes get ready."

"So you are really going out, my dear," said her mother meeting Agnes at the foot of the stairs. "I am sure we are all very much obliged to Mrs. Vale for persuading you."

"Mrs. Vale and all my friends are much kinder than I deserve," replied Agnes, "but I hope to be a better girl in future. How strange it seems to go into the streets."

We must ask the reader to skip over the space of one year, and drop down with us into Mercy Oakes' bedroom, where that young lady had for some time been confined with a sprained ankle. This most tedious confinement, especially in the summer, was borne by Mercy Oakes with her accustomed serenity. She regretted most her absence from her Sunday school, but had the satisfaction of knowing, that her place was well supplied by our friend Mrs. Vale. The little school had grown and prospered like a watered plant. Ella Hills, as merry as ever, but far more thoughtful, still kept her class, and grew every day more and more interested in her little girls as she called them. Ella's experience in teaching had done her a great deal of good: she had learned to think. Few persons can take a class of intelligent children to instruct in the Bible, without becoming strongly impressed with a deep sense of its truth, and its importance. Ella had begun to find out before, that her character was deficient in many points. She felt, as all must who feel at all, that she needed more than the comforts and luxuries of her happy home, more even than the kind parents and brothers who worshipped her there, more than the cultivation of her intellect, and the stores of thought in books; she needed more than all these, to make her happy. Yes she needed more, she wanted something higher — her moral nature was unsatisfied. She had entered the school, because Mercy had wished her to do so, and she would do anything for Mercy. She had opened the Bible to teach, without a very clear understanding of what she was to find there. But the words of Christ, as she studied them for the purpose of explaining them in school — the heavenly words — appeared to her in a new light. They were what she wanted — she felt them to be true. She had become in the fullest sense of the word a christian, a most useful and zealous Christian she was. Accompanied by Mrs. Vale, she was now spending the afternoon with Mercy.

"And now," said the latter, "tell me all about the annual meeting of the society, who were elected officers and who resigned. Do you know I have learned to have a real appetite for gossip since I have been shut up here?"

"Hear her!" exclaimed Ella. "She calls the history of the proceedings of our august and dignified society gossip! Gossip! indeed! we shall Herodotus and Xenophon called gossip next."

"Something very like it they are, if the English version may be trusted. But come — tell me all about it, what was done and what was not done."

"A great deal of talking was done, and a great deal of work was not done."

"Nonsense, Ella! How was it, Isabella?"

"Oh yes, ask the President by all means. Who should know so well? How was it, Mrs. President?"

"Why as to officers, my unworthy self was chosen to officiate as president, much against my will. Mrs. Wellwood vice, Agnes Parsons secretary and treasurer —"

"Agnes Parsons!"

"Agnes Parsons!"

"But will she accept?"

"Oh yes, and is likely to be very efficient. But I could not help thinking of the time she went out to ride with us just a year ago."

"Agnes deserves a great deal of credit for the way in which she has exerted herself the past year, and the more so as she is naturally indolent. I do not think, Isabella, you ever knew what it is to be constitutionally lazy."

"Do you believe any one is ever really so, Mercy?"

"Oh yes indeed. I used to be so myself, and no one knows how hard I worked to overcome it. I do not think I am very idle now."

"You of all people in the world."

"I assure you I was the laziest mortal in the world till I was fifteen. I never did any thing that I could help."

"You have gotten finely over it. Well, Isabella has not told you all yet; she has left out the great piece of news —"

"Oh yes —"

"Now you shall not tell it, Isabella — Dr. Martyn is going to be married, Mercy; now do not you feel bad?"

"I cannot say that I am particularly affected; but who is the young lady?"

"Guess."

"Is it any one I know?"

"Yes, very well."

"She will never guess," said Isabella, "do tell her."

"Well then, Maria Brown."

"I am not at all surprised," said Mercy quietly, "she is just the one I should have selected for him."

"What! Maria Brown! without a spark of refinement or information, and with no taste for anything but gossip and working worsted!"

"Well, she is very pretty, and dresses very well, and never talks in company — and she has very light hair and light blue eyes and is very light every way, and many people think such a person much more easily governed than such black curls and flashing eyes as yours, Ella."

"It is a great mistake as far as Maria is concerned," remarked Isabella, "for she has a great deal of temper and has no idea of being ruled by any one."

"She has not mind enough to be governed," replied Mercy, "and Dr. M. will not find his task as easy as he imagines. But to leave him and his fair bride, how useful Agnes has made herself in the society; I think she never did one quarter so much before. I hear too that she has quite a school at home this summer."

She has indeed: beside all their own children, there are all of the little Moores, Anne Parsons' children who live there now, and all the children in the street beside. She must find it quite profitable."

"It is profitable in many ways. She finds a pleasant employment, and I hear succeeds remarkably in attaching the children to her and making them learn. It is good discipline for her own mind, and helps to keep her cheerful. I am very glad she has her hands full."

"How much she has accomplished within a year," remarked Isabella, "and how different the year has been to her from what it would have been, had she persisted in sitting in her room and doing nothing. But it was hard to persuade her that she could even ride out."

"Now she is out every day upon some errand or other."

"I hope she may continue to do so," said Mercy. "With all there is to do in this world of ours, no one has a right to fold his hands in inaction: with the example of the blessed Saviour before us, we may be encouraged as to the possibility of exertion under the most depressing circumstances when health is spared. We have no right to hide our talent in a

napkin, because exertion is hard. And in the midst of all our trials, we have the sure promise which should sustain us in all things, 'Lo I am with you always even to the end of the world.' And if he be with us, who shall be against us?"

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## THE TEMPTATION OF CHRIST.

A SERMON, BY REV. SYLVESTER JUDD.

LUKE iv. 2. And Jesus was tempted of the Devil.

THE agency mentioned in the text has given rise to varied conjecture. Some have thought that by the devil is meant a malign spirit, an emissary from the infernal regions. I know of no authority for such a supposition. The original, *diabolos*, means a slanderer, an abusive person ; and *Satan*, an untranslatable word, signifies an adversary. This is all the information the Greek or the Hebrew gives us. Devil is an old English word, and belongs to the superstitions of our fore-fathers, as much as fairy, witch, hobgoblin. We are not to interpret the Bible agreeably to the errors of the people among whom it was introduced.

Some understand by this adversary an unprincipled Jewish priest, who seeing the ability, and anticipating the triumph of Jesus, attempted to change his purpose, and degrade his ideas.

Some look upon the whole passage in the light of a vision, or a dream ; or possibly discern in it a parabolic character.

I suppose it to describe a real experience of Jesus ; that under the striking imagery which oriental narrative allows, are detailed actual occurrences ; conflicts, in a word, which Christ at a certain period of his career had with evil. Beneath a dramatic guise are represented moral events, interesting, affecting, which would hardly admit of so vivid a portraiture in any other way. What went on in the breast of Jesus is transferred to a large area, and simple emotions are represented in personal forms.

It is not impossible that several individuals may have been engaged in the transaction ; that men of an evil or a sombre

mind may have encountered Jesus at this time and united their dissuasions with apprehensions of his own. A combination of circumstances may have contributed to shadow his feelings or perplex his position. There was enough in the world about him, and in his recollections of mankind, to create forebodings or kindle conceptions such as the Evangelist has described.

Christ must have had temptations, I think, prior to these which form the subject of our discourse; temptations perhaps of a more private and personal nature; it is not possible that his childhood and youth could have transpired without those vicissitudes, disappointments and trials, from which no one born of a woman is exempt.

But he had now commenced his public career; he had been proclaimed by John; he had been baptized; the spirit of God, dove-like, had descended upon him, and a voice from heaven pronounced a peculiar blessing over his head; remarkable attestations, distinguishing his high vocation and heralding his entrance upon his great work.

It is under these circumstances that the temptations originate. There are three of them.

1. The first in the progress of the narrative, and perhaps the first in the order of nature, is Despair. When he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was an hungered. He may have been literally hungry, or he may have been seized by an effect analogous to the protracted want of food. Hunger is painful, depressing, weakening. Such for the moment was the state of Christ. Hunger implies the want of satisfaction, the want of realization; such were the wants of Christ. He was an hungered, famished, vacant, dispirited. The first day that a student enters college, or an apprentice a shop, the hour that a missionary or a colonist disembarks on the shore where he is to spend his life, the moment after one has taken the oath of high office, or accepted the terms of an important venture, are pregnant with feelings kindred to those I have named. Between the present and the future, journeying and destination, desire and completion, is a gap, an interval, of repose if you will, but oftentimes of dejection, as on the eve of a battle, where deliberation is painful, and vigilance oppressive. The excitement that attends anticipation lulls, and preparation sits wearied with its load on the threshold of

fruition. Jesus, filled with the spirit of his enterprise, endued with armor of almighty proof, was thus on the verge of his great work. It was a moment favorable for the power of evil. Dark impressions might cover his mind, and secret misgivings disturb the serenity of his heart. If there were any present, hostile to his design, or any who, well inclined, were yet faithless of the result, these would embrace the opportunity to suggest what might intimidate or restrain him. If before his eyes rose the vision of the salvation of the world, on that vision, towering from Calvary, the accursed tree threw its shadow dark and far. If the turbid elements of society admitted of purification, he saw that it must be done by blood wrung from the core of his own anguish. When he was an infant, a suspicious despotism had driven him from his native land; were there none who regarded with vindictive alarm the promise of his maturer years? How should he enter the streets of Jerusalem as a reformer where he had so often gone as a worshipper? How could he contemplate the demolition of that altar, on which in his own behalf affectionate sacrifices had been duly offered? The multitudes of people in Galilee, and Decapolis, in Judea and beyond the Jordan, attached to primitive customs, entertaining very factitious notions of the Messiah, over-ridden by a powerful and bigoted priesthood, dispirited by successive wars, usurpations and exactions, would they turn out to hear him?

Christ, I say, was now fairly committed to the world; he had taken his stand on the side of the greatest revolution, he had entered the wind and current of an era the most august the earth has known; the long-enduring and dreary Past encircled him with its shadows; across the scene of the Present flitted every image of disturbance, anxiety, and suffering; the Future, bright in its prophecy, shone but faint to the actual eye. A divine voice had indeed spoken to him from the heavens, but how was that voice drowned by the discordant sounds of earth. His cause had attracted no support, and to his banner was gathered not a single follower. Matthew was quietly prosecuting his duties in the custom-house, and Peter was industriously dragging for fish on the waters of Galilee. In the solitude to which he had betaken himself, in the brief space between the times that were and the ages to

come, in the hush and pause of his magnificent career, there must have been a confluence of many emotions, and as it were rendered audible to his ear the whisperings of much that was discouraging, much that was gloomy ; and as the light of prophecy began gradually to dawn on the world of fact, the first beams would scare up many a bird of ill-omen, and present to his eye some unreal objects of speculation.

Do we wonder then to read, in this posture of affairs, that Jesus was an hungered ? He could not eat, his appetite was gone, and these were the cravings, or the uneasiness of natural want. But these forty days when the Man waited for his Hour, the Hero for the Strife, the Saviour for his Redemption, produced a deeper effect ; a craving and uneasiness of the spirit.

But hunger we say is ravenous, it waxes towards desperation.

His temptation then was Despair, he was tempted to despair ; he did not despair, but he was tempted to do so.

How should he break the dreadful suspense, how extricate himself from this perilous sensation ?

“ Command,” said the devil, “ that these stones be made bread.”

The motions of despair are downward, and while marked by recklessness and extravagance, they are directed to what, in a more auspicious mood, we should regret as mean, or condemn as criminal. It clutches at anything, it applies the most questionable modes of redress, it slakes itself from unclean fountains.

The language in effect is, Instead of waiting for the proper sustenance of the soul, supply the present exigency from any, even the most unworthy sources. You faint feeding on prospective good, turn these stones into bread ; try whatever comes first to hand ; lofty principles furnish an inadequate support, attempt what is nearer your feet, delve in the earth, fall back upon old habits and customs. The devil, that is the dark workings of the hour, says to Jesus, Relinquish your ideal scheme, content yourself with plain realities ; take the world as you find it ; instead of exhausting yourself for its welfare, derive what benefit you can from its experience, and acquiesce in its necessities.

“ If thou art the Son of God ;” if you are the favorite of heaven, you can surely acquire ease and competency without

this extraordinary outlay of feeling and purpose ; you can turn stones into bread ; you can reap emolument from familiar fields, you will be blest in any honest and industrious calling.

Such I conceive to be the spirit of the temptation represented to us under the form of Hunger.

But how does Jesus foil the adversary ? By appealing to that which was at once the argument for perseverance and the guarantee of success, the divine mind and will. "It is written," he says, "that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word, every thing, that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." "Shall not live by bread alone ;" man has a higher life than the daily bread for which we are permitted to pray and commanded to work, a life which truth and love, in their broadest acceptation, can alone suffice. Jesus could not retire to his old associations, or strike for fortune and fame with secular industry ; he was set apart for a higher service, he had consecrated himself to a rarer good. The heavenly voice that saluted his birth, and again welcomed him at his baptism, still called him onward ; and albeit, at cost and peril, he must proceed. There was bread enough in his father's house if he would return to it ; but we shall ere long find him gleaning a scant meal from distant fields through which his path lies ; and leaving the comforts of home, he must be without a place to lay his head in a world he came to save. But the recollection of God and duty rouses his dejection, and supports his equanimity, and thus he passes through the first temptation.

2. In the next, we read, the devil takes him to an elevated place, the pinnacle of the temple, and tells him to cast himself down, and he shall be preserved. The general drift of this language it is not difficult to gather, though it may not be so easy to trace the several particulars of which it is composed.

Jesus, having recovered from his hunger, or his momentary despair, and being resolved to go forward, is tempted to rashness, or something allied thereto. Let us bear in mind his attitude ; at the lowest account, it was that of reform, nay I might even say of innovation, of revolution. Under his administration, the crooked was to be made straight, and the rough smooth ; Judaism, in its restrictive and brutal features,

was to be abolished ; the veil was to be torn from the sacred court of the temple, which itself should be shaken from pavement to dome. Ritualism was to give place to spirituality, and love assume the authority of terror. The Gentile shall be enrolled with the Jew, and the fanes of idolatry become vocal with the praises of Jehovah.

I say, Jesus is tempted to rashness. In the ardor of his feelings and with the inspiration of coming good glowing within him, how natural the thought by some rapid and bold stroke to effect an object which yet lingered amid the slow-moving evolutions of events. Why should he not calculate that the Divine Providence, whose agent he is, and whose purposes he serves, would render violence and haste instruments of good even as, if he should leap from that eminence, it might save him from damage against the rocks below? Will not the order of nature be suspended that he may go on to his triumphs? Must he wait for the ordinary operation of cause and effect? Must the word be preached, and the seed sown, the conscience be enlightened, and the affections engaged? Must he ever be harmless as wise, and wise as harmless? A certain impatience of results is indicated in this temptation ; a disposition to gather fruit before it is mature ; to hazard success or ensure defeat by a too early repose. It is as if the expedient proposed by John, of calling down fire from heaven, instead of relying on the milder efficacy of truth, had suggested itself to the mind of Jesus.

Some distinguish as the prevalent sentiment of this temptation, vanity ; that he should make a display of his power ; or dazzle the eye of the beholder by putting the protection of which he was assured to some rare exploit ; as it were, literally plunging from the height on which he stood.

In any case, the temptation was to do something which he ought not to do, in a fool-hardy and ostentatious manner ; to trifl with inflexibleness, to risk inevitability. Admirable is the reply of Jesus, dextrous his evasion of the lure. "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God ;" thou shalt not presume on what is preposterous, or expect impossibilities ; thou shalt not challenge the favor of Heaven by a misplaced confidence, nor dare its wrath by violating its ordinances. The reflection of Christ in effect is, Even if I be the Son of God, I cannot

take fire in my bosom without being burned ; danger is not pledged to my security. I have no especial dispensation whereby I can preserve my balance or keep my ground in precipitancy, or ensure permanence and consolidate success by temerity.

So we discover that while the purposes of Christ were original and comprehensive, his principles immovable, his spirit chivalrous and free, his action was determined by great deliberation and prudence.

This temptation, unlike the first, implies action ; it even encourages Jesus to do something, but it would so lead his steps as to entangle them ; push forward victory into disaster, and render the great Christian movement, to use a modern phrase, reactionary. If Jesus had a counsellor in the case, and he was a good man, he was impetuous but blind ; if wicked he was clever but wily, while his hypocrisy was transparent to the clear eye of him with whom he dealt.

3. The third temptation, belonging to the domain of Ambition, is more insidious, critical, and pitiless. This also proposes action, but it would lower the standard, and corrupt the integrity of the enterprise.

“ The devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them ; and saith unto him, All these things will I give unto thee if thou wilt fall down and worship me.” It is needless to ask what elevation would command such a view, for the thing is impossible ; in no case can we see the back side of a ball. And the strictest commentators, in this instance, do not hesitate to interpret universality by particulars, and say that *all* the kingdoms of the earth means a *part of them*. Some suppose the land of Judea and such states as bordered thereon to be meant. Christ, in his wanderings, may have sat down on some eminence, where the boundaries of empire dilated before him, and the homes of nations clustered at his feet. To his mind’s eye, as in a mirage, these things may have appeared, rearing their fascinating splendor, and moving with the dignity of historic greatness. The essence of the temptation is secular fame, founded on conquest, sovereignty, power. His name shall constellate with that of Alexander or Cæsar, of whose

renown he has heard ; he shall rival, in the estimation of his countrymen, his imperial progenitor, Solomon.

There was a good deal in the Jewish mind to foster impressions like these. They interpreted the prophecies in a most material manner ; they expected a temporal deliverer, they hoped to extricate themselves from the Roman supremacy and regain their ancient liberties. The time drew near when the throne of David should recover its lost celebrity, and the favored people of God become again distinguished among the states of the earth. Terrible had been the havoc of war in Judea, and frequent were the monuments of national degradation. Many, still, wept when they remembered Zion, and watched for the cloud to break from Jerusalem, the city of their solemnities. We see how deep was this feeling, when after the crucifixion, certain Jews who had been the adherents of Christ, reverting with mournful tone to the consequences of his death, asked, " Was not this he that should have redeemed Israel ? "

Jesus was, indeed, humanly speaking, feeble ; he had not the prestige of birth, the charm of wealth, or the power of arms ; he presented nothing that should rally his countrymen or intimidate his enemies ; he was the carpenter's son, and his mother and sisters were well known in their neighborhood.

But how ran the prophecy ? " Thou, Bethlehem," — little though it was, — " art not least among the princes of Judah ; for out of thee shall come a governor, that shall rule my people Israel."

Prophecy pointed to Jesus, and how easy for him to admit its literal import, as every body else did !

Then how much good he might do ? Let him collect an army, expel the Romans, repossess the fortresses of his country, embody its force, repair its laws, promote its culture, and make it at once invincible and formidable. Then let him, at the head of his gallant troops, endeavor to diffuse his sway and set up his kingdom in the earth ; humble the pride of Rome, overturn the idolatry of Greece, chastise the insolence of Samaria, and to the whole Gentile world convey that knowledge of God which he had imbibed, and dispense that justice the value of which he well understood.

How admirable the prospect!—to reign over willing subjects, to enact a wholesome code of laws, to build a city that should be the metropolis of both hemispheres, to comprise a jurisdiction that covered the demesne of kings and the estate of princes!

How exalted the ermine and the sceptre; how desirable the treasures of gold and silver; how grateful to feed on delicacies and sleep on down; how inspiring to die in state, to bequeath kingdoms, to be chanted by bards and praised by historians, the hero of mankind, the founder of ages!

Such was the scene that greeted the eye of Jesus, such the images that flickered over his mind; all the kingdoms of the earth, and the glory of them.

And he was tempted thereby; we are expressly told the devil tempted him, and in these forms. Not that he yielded to the temptation or encouraged it, but he felt it, for a moment it caught his gaze, for a moment it burned in his heart.

And it was a glittering bait, a brilliant prize, the most brilliant that can be offered to mortal attention, a distinction the most flattering that has ever attuned its notes to human ear. Here were the privileges of office, the blandishments of rank, the inexhaustible gloze of figure and consequence, great names, great deeds, sovereignty universal, fame exceeding all fame, and the whole pouring like a cataract into the undying susceptibility of Ambition.

How easy to avoid the weary walk and the labored harangue, to avoid the contempt of peasants and the machinations of priests, avoid the garden sweat and the Golgothan torture!

The humanity of Jesus was touched on its darling side; it is here that we are peculiarly dear to ourselves, it is here where there is the greatest convergence and the greatest intensity of feeling; here where are the springs of the prodigies of human action. Ambition has been styled the last infirmity of noble minds; it is also sometimes the prelude and concomitant of their strength. Yet while it lifts a few, it is perdition to a multitude.

Jesus had a noble mind; how was it addressed? As we shall see, basely.

The devil saith to him: "All these things will I give unto thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me."

On the face of the text appears an offer, the devil tendering to Jesus the gift of earthly dominion and whatever belonged to it as a consideration for obeisance or fealty. But, if the devil be that black compound of abomination which some suppose, I do not see how he could treat in the way mentioned, for, in the first place, he was poor, and had not all this territory to give ; otherwise we should not hear of him as a lion prowling about seeking for something to devour ; secondly, he was weak, he would flee even from a child that should resist him, and Christ repeatedly cast him out ; thirdly, he was known to be a liar, and Christ would not believe his statements ; fourthly, Jesus could accomplish those objects without his help ; and lastly, if the devil had the sagacity which is attributed to him, he would make a foolish treaty, to give up his entire possessions for a mere act of homage.

There is more sense in these symbols. The devil, or adversary, if it be a man, suggests to Christ that he should adopt a temporal rather than a spiritual view of things ; that he should take up the prophecies according to their verbal import, and fulfil his duty after the common practices of mankind ; that he should revolutionize by management, and reform by the sword. ' You are destined to great things ; ' in effect he says ; remarkable interpositions have happened to your person, the auguries of a brilliant career. You are a promise that the times wait for and a leader that the people will welcome. Scripture and tradition will authenticate your claims, and clad in the habiliments of power the nation will hail you as its long looked for Shiloh. As you now are you have no influence, your coat will betray your humble origin, and though you speak in the street you will only be regarded as a well-meaning but fanatical peasant. Banish your ideas of virtue and love, and aim at such a supremacy as your ancestors created before you.'

Such I conceive to be the drift of the temptation that now assails the mind of Jesus.

The kingdoms of this world and the glory of them, in opposition to the kingdom that the Father would give him, supplied the elements of contention in his spirit.

If he would yield to this advice, if he would, as it were, fall down and worship, devote his whole self to this scheme, the godly prize should be his.

If we suppose the matter to be canvassed in his own thoughts alone, the result is the same.

He is resolved to proceed on his mission ; he has thrown off despair, he has subdued his hastiness and impatience ; he is now, so to speak, taking counsel of that very prudence which he has called to his aid. The proposition is as above-stated. To this his reflections turn. It is a question of modes. Must he relinquish the ideal and conform to the actual ? Can he erect an empire of love ? Shall not the powers with which he is clothed, the rather, embody themselves in institutions and deeds at once striking and familiar, than diffuse themselves by gradual and gentle evaporation over the spirits of men ? Shall his first instruction to the people be an exhortation to repent, to deep inward meditation on their own souls ? or shall he not rather address their patriotic memories, and arouse their martial fervor ? Why bless the poor in spirit ? encourage rather the valiant, the hardy. Instead of healing the sick, let him repair the majesty of the Levitical service. Instead of taking little children in his arms, let him grasp the spear and practise with the shield.

There were opposed to him the passions of men, their self-interest, their education, their superstitions, their systems of government. There were against him the examples of all of whom he had read or heard ; and he might well hesitate.

He was precisely in that juncture where thousands before him and thousands since, have yielded.

What did he ?

He said to the devil, "Get thee hence ; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." "Away from me all thoughts of a worldly expediency, all yearnings after carnal aggrandizement. Let me not give place to these intimations or be moved by these apprehensions. Reverently, submissively, I bow to the Father's will. He has called me to a great work ; from the manger in Bethlehem he called me, by all the grace and strength of my childhood he called me, by the wisdom of my riper years, by my deeper intuitions and holiest meditations, by the visitations of his love, and the gifts of his power, he has called me. Mystical is the vista before me, obscurity rests on the times and seasons ; for others' sins this frame shall

suffer, for others' woes this heart must bleed ; the robe shall be torn from these lacerated limbs, and my crown shall be woven of thorns ; but let me on.

Such is the account of the onset and retreat of the third and last temptation.

Then the devil leaveth him, and behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

He needed ministry, he needed support, soothing, and repose. Herein we see the intensity of his emotions and the violence of the conflict. Afterwards in the garden he rose to the same pitch of agitation and distress, and the same relief was at hand ; but he did not now as then ask that the cup might pass from him ; he drank it, and fainted. His was the momentary reaction of a great mind after a great struggle. The decision left him calm but weak. So the good beings, whether from other worlds or this is not said, that had pursued his steps, and watched about his musings, ministered unto him. They gave him to eat, they comforted his spirits, they sympathized with his choice.

Any description of the temptation I am sure must be inadequate. It is strikingly but briefly told by the sacred historian. All readers gather many and useful hints from it, even if they do not undertake to investigate its spirit. It can be truly comprehended only by attending to the mind, position, and purpose of Jesus. In this light I have treated it.

It is not strange that in rehearsing this experience to his disciples, whose memories have transmitted it to us, he should speak of that which arrested his thoughts, and as it were way-laid his steps, as a devil, an adversary ; it was adverse to his plans, his mission, his conscience, his duty.

We learn many things from the temptation of Jesus ; but with only a short improvement shall I detain you.

1. First Christ was tempted, really tempted. This is the assertion of the text ; it is the upshot of the whole account. Being tempted he could not be God. God cannot be tempted. To think of making such overtures to the Almighty, is not only absurd, it is a blasphemy. Not merely was his humanity tempted, but his whole being, so to say, was brought within the reach of this influence ; his mind, his soul, were attacked ; all that he is to man, his miraculous endowments, his power to

bless and to save, his peculiar office, his capacity for becoming a sacrifice, were sensible to the evil. Of course no part of him could be God.

2. But what is more pertinent, he was tempted and is able to succor such as are in like extreme.

He was tempted, and he had the capability of temptation ; he was not a rock, or ether, that violence could not agitate, or plausibility confuse him. He was a *temptable* being. This enhances his interest ; it brings him nearer our hearts ; it introduces him to our sympathies. He, the pure, the spiritual, the divine, had sensations bordering on doubt and hopelessness, on his eye the basilisk world had exerted its spell, he trod the margin of wild and almost vindictive impetuosity ; while we behold his struggles with awe, there is that in them which touches us most deeply. He had not now finished his work, he had not now borne the burden of human sin and woe ; a direful death, a cloudy termination of life, did not now impend over him ; he was in the printemps and fresh blood of his course, he was not thirty years of age.

But in this way, in this way alone, his contribution to humanity is complete ; thus the integrity of hope and the desire of the soul are perfected. We can now say, He is my Saviour, he is the being of all others that shall lead me to virtue and heaven. He understands my wants, my case is his own.

The temptation of Jesus is available for our salvation after the same manner as his death. We see there how he escaped from the snare of the fowler, how he rose from the shock of evil. We see how we may come out safely from the valley of weakness.

3. The temptations under review are not those to which the vicious and mean, in especial, are exposed, but such as befall the great and the good. They are properly the temptations of noble and heroic minds ; of noble and heroic moods which all of us at some periods cherish.

We are not Christ ; but we have an important mission ; we have our salvation to secure, some excellence to promote, some wickedness to subdue ; and we are all, as he was, tempted to despair. We are an hungered and athirst for the good not yet attained ; we fast many days by reason of this delay of expectation. A dark finger points downward, an articulate

baseness, says, 'Turn stones into bread ; grasp the present, indulge the sensual, be content with the iniquitous, cheat if you can make it profitable ; crawl in the dust, it may be there is gold there.'

The temptation to rashness, to violence, to excessive haste, and vain self-consequence, I need not say how common it is.

The temptation to ambition, to a carnal and secular ambition, to rise by any means, to reign whatever may be subservient to us, how prevalent, how fatal ! To control persons, marshal armies, subsidize the revenues of men, how much more persuasive and taking, than to exert a supremacy over ideas, to give law to sentiment, and dignity to virtue !

The statesmen of France, of Europe, of our own land, great and noble minds, I will not doubt,—how are they tempted ! a devil has the ear of each of them ; "The kingdoms of the world and the glory of them ;" —what a glitter of fair sights, what a thrill of sweet sounds !

God grant them and all of us deliverance !

Jesus, renew thyself within us ; Jesus, translate our aims to thy sublime heights ; clothe our hearts with majesty and strength !

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## REFLECTIONS ON THE OCCASION AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DEATH OF ZWINGLE.

BY REV. CHARLES T. BROOKS.

Is it not a solemn thought that some of the sublimest scenery of the world has in all ages been the theatre of the most sanguinary and wanton conflicts between man and man ? Think of Spain, Mexico and Switzerland, the Pyrenees and the Alps, Swiss, Italian and Tyrolese. Captain Sherer, in his Continental Rambles, speaking of a sharp action between the French and the Russians that took place in one of the passes of the St. Gothard says, "I know not how it is, or why I should so feel it ; but uniforms and words of command, and the spitting fire of regular sharp-shooters, seem quite out of character with the scene. Man feels himself a pygmy in these places : heroes and horses stretched dead on the wide battle-

plain ; foot-soldiers lying slain on all the green knolls, and yagers skirmishing with their rifles among the bushes and thickets, are things common and in keeping with fields of warfare ; but feeble creatures crawling about, round and among these high fragments of the day of chaos, this stony girdle of our world, and with distant and pitiful shots, levelling their fellows, and bodies lying *small* near huge masses of dark stone ! — it sounds too daring, &c.” All this is very true as far as it goes, but Captain Sherer or any one else must have a very morbid taste not to feel that war and its works are out of character and keeping in any scene within the dominion of the God of love — under the heavens which the Father of mercy and majesty fills with his presence, and in the earth which he has made not for a slaughter-field but for a nursery of human beings. In comparison with the enormity of war in itself considered — the magnified duelling — all such distinctions as those of place and person and cause, I had almost said, fade into insignificance.

But surely the idea of its being inconsistent with the ministerial and not with the manly character to fight will not bear examination. The manly character is the highest and holiest a man can sustain ; and what he has a right to do as a man, he surely has a right to do as a Christian. Therefore I cannot sympathize with the common distinction that, Zwingli, for instance, was a minister of the Gospel and *therefore* ought not to have partaken of the war-spirit. It is very much in the same spirit that an old bishop said, “ Though as a Christian bishop I cannot fight, yet as a secular prince I may and must lead my subjects to battle.” But his servant well replied, “ When Satan comes for the prince, what will become of the bishop ? ”

I cannot yet see how it can be lawful for nations to array themselves against each other for the defence of political rights and not for the defence of religious rights, especially so far as they also are political ones. The true peace principle of the Gospel strikes at the root of the whole, so far as Christians are concerned.

Mosheim remarks that “ it was not indeed, to perform the sanguinary office of a soldier that Zwingli was present at this engagement, but with a view to encourage and animate, by his counsels and exhortations, the valiant defenders of the Protes-

tant cause." I confess that I cannot see that Mosheim defends Zwingle any better than the trumpeter defended himself when taken by his enemies in battle. They punished him the most readily and sorely on the ground that he was in truth the most effectual fighter of all, and it was a sound position. And did Zwingle's sacred war-trumpet give an uncertain sound? Supposing that he did not go to fight, himself, did he not go to make others fight?

In conclusion, I do not feel that I can leave the subject here without remarking that there is something to be said in extenuation of the military part of Zwingle's character and creed. His error in this respect was of the head. We must consider his times and his convictions. He started with the principle that the moral, practical, political manifestation of religion is first in importance, and he was certainly right so far as this, that unless the truth is expressed and established in outward things, we have no evidence of its existence. Zwingle thought and felt that politics in order to be tolerable, ought to be religious — an idea which might do good in some quarters at the present day. And we must confess that after the thing had once come into public politics Zwingle's situation was a somewhat trying one. The Bernese had determined upon trying the effect of a blockade, cutting off supplies from the Catholic Cantons of the interior, replying to all murmurs, which is the worse to cut off supplies from the body or from the soul, as you would do? Zwingle and the Zurichers insisted that this slow murder by starvation of innocent women and children was far more cruel than open war. Berne replied that she would not begin the war, as if that was not beginning it, to shut up and starve them into hungry wolves. Zwingle said, "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink." The consequences predicted by this clear-headed man arrived and the advance of the exasperated regiments from the interior upon Zurich made it in Zwingle's view a war of self-defence now. If it was right for a Christian to fight, it was right for a Christian preacher to fight, as well as to exhort others to. And the consequence holds to this day — if it is lawful for a Christian, for any one who should practise Christianity, to take part in war, it is lawful for him who preaches that men should practise Christianity to do the same. War in

any given case is right or wrong, necessary or unnecessary: if it is justifiable as a human duty — justifiable for men in a Christian land, who are called to be Christians, then it is to be sustained and supported with pen, voice and hand if need be of all Christians, whether ministers or simply men. Put war upon its only legitimate defence, and it stands forth, at once, to be seen and known of all men as an absurdity.

KIND reader, shall I introduce you to the pleasant village of Thistleville? It is indeed a beautiful spot; nature and art seem as if they had tried to outvie each other, and yet in a hot, sultry, summer's day, you would be inclined to give the preference to Dame Nature, she has so beautifully shaded the main street with elms and locusts, which the oldest inhabitants will tell you were never set by man's hand, but grew spontaneously; as if you could believe such a strange assertion; for we all know, nature is very helter skelter in her movements, and shoots up in twigs, and branches out in trees just where her wild freaks please to ordain. But besides these shaded walks, Thistleville boasts of a splendid river which runs through its centre; and neat cottages, overgrown with ivy and honeysuckle in front, and in the rear shaded with willows, beside which this clear blue stream had run for ages, might tempt any traveller to stop and inquire if *board* could be obtained in this picturesque valley? You would infinitely have preferred it to Newport, my friend; yes, or Nahant; to Rye Beach, or Rockport; for the shady tranquillity which seemed to rest upon the foliage in the hot day we spoke of, you would naturally suppose had lent an influence to the tone of social life, and made that alike lovely and calm, ~~because~~ <sup>because</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~had~~ <sup>had</sup> It was my fortune to pass a few summer months in this place just at the time of a very agitating occurrence: viz. "the settling" of a minister was in contemplation. It appeared to be the absorbing theme of all circles; and how could I live there and not partake of the excitement? I

was told by Deacon G. that there was great unanimity with their former pastor ; that to use his significant phrase "he was a jewel of a man, but alas, he died !" For thirty-five years he had ministered in that pulpit, and as I understood had descended very eloquently upon "general sins," leaving *particular* ones to take care of themselves.

He was a very guileless man undoubtedly, but a very unexcitable one. He used to say the age was destined to progress, and new movements would make their way without coercive measures. He was an Antislavery man, and a Temperance man, and a non-resistant I conclude, but he never meddled with such matters. He never believed much in *preaching* about these things ; and, continued the Deacon, "Sir, he never made a man mad with a sermon in his life ;—he was too sensible a man for that." Of course therefore the village, as we should say in popular language, "was behind the times" in respect to "progressive movements," and it was very difficult now to find a Pastor to suit, since a few of the young people were not entirely satisfied with what much pleased their fathers. The Deacon had a son whose business called him from home quite often, and he had become greatly interested in many exciting topics, and *he* wanted a man able to discuss them ; he had infused this feeling into other young aspirants, and when a candidate came to preach for them, while the fathers inquired if he were sound in the faith, and really believed in depravity and future punishment, the sons inquired if he favored total-abstinence and preached good antislavery sermons, and talked about the sins of our own times ? To be sure, the fathers felt greatly embarrassed in meeting these "new-fangled" questions, but they acknowledged the children would rule and young people could not be kept with bit or bridle, as they were in their time.

Thus it happened that candidate after candidate had been applied to, and not coming up to the mark of their lofty ideal, had been dismissed when their three Sabbaths had expired. They, (that is the young people,) were fully intent upon settling a talented, wide-awake sort of man, who feared God and compromised with no man's conscience. At length they believed they had found such an one, but the Deacon and his party feared he would be a disorganizer ; for he had already

appointed a third service to discuss the subject of Temperance, and he had handled it in a masterly way ; so much so, that the Deacon said he felt "secular subjects" had better be discussed some other day beside the Sabbath, since he inveighed against the traffic in a small way, and the Deacon always had kept a little "grocery" store, just to accommodate his neighbors, and the son thought for some time it was becoming too convenient quite near home ; — but hush, to my beginning.

As I said, they were about settling a "modern" man, and a council was to be called to inquire into the soundness of his creed touching doctrinal points ; for some had intimated he was not so orthodox as their good old former pastor. Upon the morning of ordination, the inquiry respecting his "tenets" began with Deacon G., who asked the candidate if he believed in the divinity of the Saviour ? To which he gave an unequivocal "Yes I do most firmly." The Deacon touched a reverend divine near him, who asked, "Do you believe in the holy and blessed Trinity, three persons in one Godhead ?" "I do not," came out equally boldly. "I believe in one God, in our Saviour his Son, and in the influence of the Holy Spirit which descends upon men's hearts as they admit its blessed influences ; — but as to your technical doctrine of a Trinity as *you* receive it, I shall never advocate it." Here was a long pause ; — should the council proceed to ordain such a candidate ? Much division arose, yet the statement of a brother, that phraseology varied in our time from a former period, and a desire for unanimity prevailing, but few more doctrinal points were urged, and the ordination took place on a sultry day in the month of August.

The new minister had a full house on the following Sabbath. It was said people were out who had not been in a church for twenty years. Old lady Frizzle was there, and waved her huge fan, and nodded assent to every word of both sermons ; and what Mrs. Frizzle admired, her clique always set down as "excellent" doctrine. Deacon G. said it was "close preaching ; and his son declared "he was just the man."

It was evident to an attentive listener the minister's course would be plain, open, direct, perfectly fearless of man, and that he was thoroughly furnished in every good word and work. Yet he had some flinty substances to work upon,

which needed great discretion and prudence to handle aright. One thing however was clearly in his favor. He was long-suffering, not easily provoked, a devout man, and willing to wait God's time rather than use coercive measures to accomplish his work. He was a prudent man; never repeated what another had told him, always saw something good in everybody, and yet he never compromised one iota of his sentiments to popular favor.

In this discreet way he so managed that he could preach upon any subject, and yet nobody questioned his right so to do. In one year every man was a thorough temperance man, and not a dram was sold in the village. Every child felt that slavery was a great evil, and even masters who held slaves whose fathere lived in Thistleville, would in their summer sojournings at the old homestead, lead in discussion upon this subject. Everybody seemed enlightened while not a few were "renewed in the spirit of their minds." Doctrinal dissensions were banished almost entirely; everybody thought their creed sufficiently orthodox, if they could not clearly define it; the church increased in numbers; the sewing circle was established, weekly conversations were held upon all subjects touching spiritual interests, and even the good deacon felt that *secular* and *spiritual* subjects ought to have one and the same spiritual bearing, and every occupation become disreputable upon which God's blessing could not be implored. The village was indeed a charming place; and when the pastor was united to the deacon's youngest daughter, not a word was uttered by any mother whose daughters were equally fair and virtuous. Upon a salary of six hundred dollars in a neat little cottage by the river-side, lives the worthy pastor, and should you ever question the value of the *right kind* of a minister, or doubt his ability with God's blessing to reform, elevate and enlighten a people, remember the situation of *Thistleville as it was*, and look upon *Thistleville as it is*.

Young man, are you training yourself aright for the ministry? Are you cultivating a pleasing deportment, an amiable disposition which will dispose others to receive what you may give? I have seen many sad failures where an overbearing self-esteem was substituted instead of a mild and winning grace which held the soul in captivity. — You may preach the

doctrines of grace until you are gray-headed, and unless divine grace has sweetly tempered and adjusted all the discordant elements of your *own soul*, just so far as you are defective, it is quite probable your people will be. "I wonder," said one minister to another, "that brother B. is no more successful; he certainly has uncommon gifts." — "But," replied the other, "he knows not how to apply them; had he studied less theology and *more of man*, he would have been a prodigy." Is not this the knowledge which our young men most need? The human heart is a deep study, and to reach it we must be able to know its secret chambers.

S.

## LETTER FROM WASHINGTON.

WASHINGTON, JUNE, 1849.

I HAVE just returned from a visit among the Quakers at Sandy Spring. This is a district about twenty miles north of us, the way to it lying through a very interesting region of the State of Maryland. It is a granite country, rather hilly, and at an elevation of four hundred and fifty feet above the city. The climate is healthy and comparatively cool, and the resemblance to the scenery of New England is very striking at every step. The same hills and woods, the same clumps of chestnut and noble oaks, the same underbrush with wild flowers beneath the trees, the roadsides lined with sweetbriar and mountain laurel, the rocky water courses of deep ravines, seem to make every mile of the way familiar. Of course one misses the villages and meeting-houses. The thriftiest and most populous part of the country, that among the Quakers, is like the interval between two villages in Worcester county; and country towns there seem to be none, but instead a congregation of shops, hotels, lawyers, &c. in the neighborhood of a court-house, making a political capital on a small scale, not a busy and thriving town. There are the larger villages, but we passed none. So much for the likeness and the difference between Maryland and Massachusetts.

The Quakers among whom we visited, had the great merit, about fifty years ago, of abolishing slavery among them, for

conscience' sake, and excluding it utterly by the discipline of their "society." There were some who in this way set free two or three hundred slaves. These they colonized among them, on small lots of ground, and there they live, very contentedly. They work for hire, occupy their little huts, and attend their own little log built church. I believe there are no cases of their joining the Friends' society. Their choice does not lie that way, and they are rather discouraged, if not actually excluded ; but they seem to be on the best of terms. The district, though of poor soil naturally, is the most productive and populous in this part of the State. There are plain, neat houses at intervals, some of them painted, with roses clustering luxuriantly over the porch or clinging affectionately about the doors and windows, a meeting-house of brick down a lane in the bosom of a wood, good roads, good gates and fences, and noble fields of wheat. The people are kind, intelligent and hospitable, there is no need to say. Some hold very loosely to the Quaker organization, many are skeptical about their peculiar points of faith, some have quitted the body, though living peaceably among them ; but with all this the discipline is very strictly kept, and up to a certain point it does good service for morals and friendly intercourse.

It was the day of the Quarterly Meeting, which is held at four several points at different seasons. These meetings are solely to keep up the discipline and maintain the stringency of the organization. There are twelve "queries," which are solemnly propounded to the conscience of every member. These are all taken count of at the monthly meetings, which report to the quarterly, and these again to the yearly conference in Baltimore. At this meeting only three were brought up — those touching attendance at meetings, propriety of demeanor, and gentleness in administering discipline. I wish I could remember some of the precise words. The speaker whom I heard was the worst I ever imagined. I could not have supposed that any caricature would venture so far beyond the limits of ordinary tone and manner. He had been a methodist preacher, and his address was a methodist exhortation, with actually the rythm and melody of the strange old fashioned minor airs which farmers' wives in the country will sometimes sing you, to words that were in fashion a hundred years ago.

Some of the women, I was told, were still more decidedly melodious, but them I did not hear. A part of this man's address was very good—some of it very bold and earnest—an appeal for fidelity in bearing their testimony against the guilt of slave-holding. It was considered very free and bold—several slaveholders of the neighborhood being present, and Lucretia Mott having been checked a few years ago by the elders, for prudence' sake, while speaking with much less emphasis. So the leaven works. These Quakers, however, disown and deplore the agitation at the North, at least in the form it has often taken. Their three great testimonies are against war, slavery, and a hireling ministry—their discipline dealing very rigidly with any signs of countenance to either. One of my entertainers was excluded for administering oaths in his capacity of surveyor; and my friend who introduced me left their communion a year ago, to save them the unpleasant business of disowning him for attending our church. But a liberal feeling is growing up among them; and if they require such earnest exhortation on some of these points as we listened to, it cannot be long before their discipline loses its power. A good deal of skepticism has prevailed among them, from their making the actual inspiration of the speakers their point of faith. The machinery of appointing elders to decide on the inspiration, does not always work well. Unitarian and rationalistic writings find great favor among them.

The signal for closing the meeting was given by the two leading elders shaking hands. At the instant up went the wooden partition between the men and women's side, with a great clatter, while the miscellaneous audience passed out, leaving the two bodies in secret conference. After an hour's strolling about, the business meeting being nearly over, people began to disperse.

Between this Quaker district and the luxuriant cultivation which is beginning to spread out from Washington city, there is a tract of a dozen miles, only beginning to be reclaimed to a thrifty wheat culture. It has been heretofore in great plantations, and exhausted in raising tobacco. It seems that manure injures the quality of the weed, and affects its price; so the raw land is worked a few years and then abandoned. It is curious to pass fields so deplorably sterile and deserted, and

then to see right opposite luxuriant acres of waving wheat, and be told that all this has been reclaimed within two or three or five years. A very great work is going on in these Maryland and Virginia estates in our vicinity — changing of hands, and dividing and reclaiming of worn-out land. Northern farmers, with free labor, bone-dust and guano, are working a great social revolution at the South. Going down to Mount Vernon a week or two ago, I was told that that very day half a dozen farmers had come to look at the lands, and twenty or more were expected as bidders for a large estate to be sold in a day or two more. Every newspaper seems to have an advertisement of the sale of old plantations, in lots to suit purchasers; and the price of land mounts from five dollars to fifty per acre with surprising speed. Climate, markets, and price of land are all in favor of this colonizing here — society, villages and quality of land are to make. Meanwhile slavery is blotted out, and a flourishing agricultural region comes into being. The change is most favorable for the poor people of the neighborhood, who begin by receiving better wages, and can end by "voting themselves a farm," honestly paid for and well tilled.

There is something in the valley of the Potomac, at least the lands lying off at the north, which I should think would be particularly tempting to northern emigration. The region lies so high that the climate is essentially tempered by it. The day I went through it, was positively cold — more like June in New Hampshire than our notion of June in Maryland. The one drawback is the existing state of society, which seems harder to remake than to make anew in the unpeopled West, especially under the discouragement of alien habits and laws. But, as a set-off to this, is the wonderfully familiar, almost domestic, look of the country to a northern eye. It is a sunnier New England, with brighter skies and gentler climate, only subtracting the thriving villages and busy trades and schools and churches, all which make New England what she is, and will have in a good measure to be imported. And some of the elements that are working the great change, one sees in every walk and drive that takes him out of the city and gives him a taste of the country air. *Yours ever at J. H. A.*

## INTELLIGENCE.

**CHURCH AT BRIDGEPORT, CONN.**—The corner-stone of a new Unitarian church in Bridgeport, to which we observe Madam Polannen, its principal benefactor, has allowed her husband's name to be affixed, was laid by Rev. F. A. Farley of Brooklynn, N. Y., June 21.

**MONROE, WISCONSIN.**—A new chapel, for the worship of Liberal Christians, was dedicated in this place, May 29, 1849, Elder Walworth preaching the sermon.

**PEACE CONVENTION, PARIS.**—Rev. Joseph Allen, D. D., of Northborough, Rev. James Freeman Clarke of the Church of the Disciples, Boston, Rev. John Cordner of the Unitarian Church, Montreal, C. W., and Mr. Cyrus Pierce late of the West Newton Normal School, sailed for Liverpool in the Plymouth Rock, Friday, July 6. All have credentials to the Peace Convention to meet in Paris this month.

**INAUGURATION OF REV. JARED SPARKS, LL. D., AS PRESIDENT OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY.**—This occasion, which was, and might well be, one of great rejoicing to all the friends of the College, took place at Cambridge, June 20, 1849. The ceremonies were attended by a large multitude of people, and were conducted in an impressive manner. An official address was made by his Excellency Gov. Briggs, to Mr. Sparks, in the vernacular, in connection with the presentation of the keys, charter and seal, and was responded to by the President elect. A Latin Oration was pronounced by Charles Francis Choate of the Senior Class. A Latin Hymn, written by F. A. Lane, also an undergraduate, was sung by a select choir. The Inaugural Address followed, by President Sparks. The devotional exercises were conducted by Rev. Dr. Walker, and Rev. Dr. Francis, Professors in the University. In the evening there were festivities, and an illumination of the College Buildings. It is well known, we presume, that the election of Mr. Sparks and his administration thus far, have afforded general and peculiar gratification. He is welcomed as a worthy successor to President Everett, whose term of office was as honorable, independent, and useful as it was brief.

**MEADVILLE THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL.**—Wednesday evening, June 27, Rev. S. J. May of Syracuse, N. Y., delivered the Sermon before the Graduating Class, which on Thursday afternoon, June 28, took their leave of the Institution in the public services. Five Dissertations were read. The Trustees had meetings to consider the wants of the School, which meetings, it is said, promise well for the future.

**COMMENCEMENT WEEK AT CAMBRIDGE.**—The Discourse before the graduating class of the Divinity School was delivered on the evening of July 15, by Rev. F. H. Hedge of Bangor, Me. It was an able and eloquent address—on the mission of Liberal Christians, which, it was maintained, should encourage an eclectic spirit, open-communion, and the application of Christianity to the life of the individual and the community.

*The Annual Visitation* of the Divinity School on Monday, July 16, was not very fully attended. Well written dissertations on appropriate subjects were read by several gentlemen,—two of the class being absent from the country.

*The Alumni* of the School met in the afternoon. The old officers were re-elected. Rev. E. S. Gannett, D. D., of Boston was chosen the First, and Rev. Calvin Lincoln of Fitchburg the Second Preacher for the next year. The Address before the Alumni—on the responsibility for belief or opinion—was delivered by Rev. E. B. Hall, D. D., of Providence, R. I. Before and after the Address, a frank, earnest and friendly discussion took place on the condition and wants of the Divinity School. The whole subject was referred to a committee, which had already had it under consideration, to report at the Autumnal Convention.

*Wednesday, July 18,* was Commencement Day, according to the new arrangement. The attendance in the church was good, though Cambridge was very still and destitute of all the signs of a holiday. The graduating class consisted of seventy-eight: of this number thirty-five had parts assigned them, and twenty-four spoke. The degree of M. D. was conferred on forty-one, and that of LL. B. on forty-five gentlemen. The honorary degree of D. D. was conferred on Rev. Levi Washburn Leonard of Dublin, N. H., Rev. G. W. Burnap of Baltimore, Maryland, and Rev. Charles Kittredge True of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Charlestown, Mass. The honorary degree of LL. D. was conferred on Hon. Horace Mann, M. C., Mass., Hon. Richard Fletcher, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, Mass., Hon. George Eustis, Chief Justice of Louisiana, and Hon. Theophilus Parsons, Professor of Law in Harvard College. The honorary degree of A. M. was conferred on Jonathan Ingersoll Bowditch of Boston, Francis Alger of South Boston, and Arnold Guyot, Professor of Physical Geography, &c., Neufchatel, Switzerland.

*The Alumni of the College* met in the afternoon to revive and re-organize their Association: Ex-President Everett in the Chair, and Rev. S. K. Lothrop Secretary. It was unanimously resolved to re-establish the Society; and the officers chosen several years since, were requested to take measures to secure appropriate exercises on Commencement day, 1850.

On Thursday, July 19, the Boylston Prizes for Declamation were obtained, the first by Robert Bickford of the Junior Class, and A. W. Whipple of the Class just graduated; the second by J. D. Taylor, C. L. Flint, and C. C. Follett of the Class just graduated.

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**PHI BETA KAPPA SOCIETY.**—The Oration before the Phi Beta Kappa was by Rev. Dr. Bethune of Philadelphia—on “The Claims of our Country on its Literary Men.” This was a somewhat discursive, but able, eloquent and patriotic discourse, attentively listened to, notwithstanding the heat, for two hours. The Poem was by Mr. John Felton of the Law School.